# AMS Procurement Desktop:

♦   A Functional Description of Procurement Desktop Capabilities

# The Desktop

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◆ The system is built with an industry standard Microsoft Windows ™ based graphical user interface

◆ The Desktop interface mimics an office workspace, providing electronic file cabinets, file folders, and in/outboxes

◆ User-definable elements allow each person to personalize workspace:

   • Create and name any number of file cabinets and file folders

   • Determine timing of system messages

   • Create "alerts" as reminders of important tasks and meetings for yourself and your co-workers as appropriate

◆ Users can access documents anywhere in the system instantly(security permitting)

◆ No documents are ever lost in the mail or in complicated filing systems

◆ Users can attach yellow "sticky" notes for comments, messages, reminders, *etc.* to any item

◆ Duplicate data entry is largely eliminated, improving the quality of information captured by the system

◆ Electronic document creation, routing, and storage enable a "paperless office" environment

# Electronic Workflow

*Electronic routing reduces the flow of paper, eliminates lost documents, and increases the rate of information exchange for an efficient, uncluttered office environment.*

◆ Electronic routing allows users to send documents to other users on the system on an *ad hoc* basis

◆ A user can route a document along a pre-defined path —the system automatically forwards the document from one reviewer to the next

◆ Electronically routed documents are received in users' inboxes

◆ Team cabinets provide work groups with shared access to documents

◆ Managers can assign and/or reassign tasks to teams or to individual employees

◆ Employee profile and status information is always available to managers

◆ Managers and employees can see an employee's current workload

◆ Managers can assign an automatically calculated completion date to any task

# Software Integration

*Procurement Desktop provides seamless access to office automation tools so users can create supporting documentation using leading word processing and spreadsheet packages.*

◆ At any stage in the procurement process, users can access third-party software applications such as word processing and spreadsheet packages without exiting the system

◆ Files created in third-party packages are stored in the system's internal database, providing document security and quick access

◆ Standard boilerplate text can be stored in third party document templates and used to create form letters, evaluation spreadsheets, statements of work, *etc.*

◆ Examples of applications that can be used in conjunction with the system include the suite of Microsoft Office ™ products, as well as other Windows-based word processing, spreadsheet and other applications

◆ Integration of familiar third-party software reduces the training and learning time required for users of the system

◆ Desktop faxing and electronic document imaging have been integrated for clients as necessary

# Purchase Requests

*Electronic purchase requests can be created, approved, and transmitted to the purchasing office online.*

◆ Purchase requests may be initiated from any location on an organization's LAN or WAN and forwarded electronically to the purchasing office

◆ Users can create new purchase requests from scratch, or save time by copying an existing purchase request (or template) and changing the appropriate data

◆ Purchase requests are automatically assigned a unique number, so they can be tracked and retrieved in the future

◆ Modeled after conventional paper purchase request forms, the electronic purchase request form prints just as it appears on the computer monitor in *WYSIWYG* (What You See Is What You Get) format

◆ The purchase request is a multi-part form made up of different windows for header data and line item information, allowing users to choose which information to complete in what order

◆ Users can modify or cancel purchase requests which have already been submitted for approval

◆ Seamless integration with other office automation tools (word processing, spreadsheet, *etc.*) allows users to produce supporting documents such as Statements of Work and spreadsheets for cost estimates

◆ Data from purchase requests is automatically transferred to the associated purchase order, reducing duplicate data entry

# Approvals

*To ensure that documents are approved by the appropriate reviewers, Procurement Desktop provides electronic routing and approval functionality.*

◆ Online approvals allow purchase request and purchase orders to move through a completely electronic environment efficiently

◆ The system's approval process is facilitated through the use of pre-defined electronic routes which ensure the appropriate review

◆ Each approver can review the comments and recommendations of previous users in the approval chain before approving, disapproving, or conditionally approving a document

◆ Funding actions such as funds commitment or verification can take place at the time of approval (through an interface to your financial system)

◆ Digitized signatures can be applied to approved documents

# Vendor / Supply Base Management

*Vendor information maintained online includes everything from names and addresses to types of goods supplied.*

◆ Vendor evaluation forms can be completed at any stage in the award or post-award process

◆ Detailed vendor information is stored in a central database and automatically incorporated into source lists, solicitations, and awards

◆ Captured vendor information includes everything from address to TIN number to types of goods supplied

◆ A "vendor review" process can designate vendors who have been disapproved, preventing buyers from awarding to inactive vendors

◆ EDI-enabled to support electronic order transmission to suppliers

# Bid Management

*Bidders and potential sources are tracked and evaluated at every stage of the pre-award process, helping buyers make the best award decisions possible.*

◆ Electronic source lists linked to the vendor database incorporate up-to-the-minute information about vendors and potential vendors

◆ Source lists can be automatically populated by entering the vendor criteria (*e.g.,* products supplied) for a particular purchase

◆ Line item information is automatically pulled from the purchase request into quote sheets and Requests for Quotations (RFQs)

◆ RFQs can be mailed to vendors or transmitted via EDI

◆ Quote sheets can be completed during telephone conversations or after receiving quotes, and provide features to automatically extend line item amounts and provide totals which account for all credits and discounts

◆ Solicitations, requests for proposals, *etc.* automatically incorporate appropriate clauses from online policy and procedure documents

◆ Solicitation amendments pull information from the original forms and allow users to create "change pages" as necessary

◆ Quote evaluation features include both summary and line-by-line comparisons of each vendor's offer to the purchase request requirements

◆ Correspondence generated during the pre-award process can be created through the Desktop using a seamless interface to templates created in third-party word processing software

◆ Correspondence sent to any vendor on the source list can be tracked in an online correspondence log

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# Purchase Orders

*Full purchase order functionality supports far more than simple form generation features.*

◆ Purchase orders automatically incorporate all information entered on the purchase request

◆ Detailed accounting information can be maintained for each line item, including multiple accounting strips for every line

◆ Line items can be combined from multiple purchase requests onto a single purchase order

◆ Multiple purchase orders can be generated based on a single purchase request

◆ Modeled after conventional paper purchase order forms, the electronic purchase order form prints just as it appears on the computer monitor in *WYSIWYG* (What You See Is What You Get) format

◆ Purchase Order modifications pull information from the original forms and allow users to amend information as necessary before issuing the change order

◆ Volume Purchase Agreement information can be maintained online, and individual orders can be made against those agreements

# Contracting Features

*Designed to support the knowledge worker, the system allows contracting officers to conduct pre-award and contract administration activities in any order they wish.*

◆ Milestone templates capture detailed information on each scheduled activity, including dependencies, dates (planned, revised, and actual), task descriptions, and anticipated completion dates

◆ Bid abstract, source evaluation, and offer evaluation spreadsheet templates can be maintained online for use by the entire office

◆ Contract modifications can be created over the life of the contract

◆ Orders can be issued and tracked against "Master Contracts"

◆ An award status feature provides an instant "snapshot" view of contract activity to date

◆ Problems with current contractors and competitive protests by other vendors can be recorded using online protest features

◆ Audits can be tracked against a contract by contractor, subcontractor, or accounting system

◆ Checklist documents and supporting documentation can be created at any point in the contract process

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# Receiving Support

*Procurement Desktop facilitates line item level matching between receipts and awards, thus improving the purchasing information available and helping our clients decrease processing time between receipt and payment.*

◆ Receiver documents capture detailed header information about each shipment, including shipment number, total containers, gross weight, damage flags, carrier/shipping technique, *etc.*

◆ A "Find Match" feature enables users to search the system for matching orders based on any of a number of criteria (order number, vendor name, order date, SIC Code, Issuing Office, *etc.*)

◆ Shipments that fully satisfy a particular order can be recorded at the header level, without forcing users to specify receipts on a line-by-line basis

◆ Line-item level matching capabilities give users the option of specifying which line items have been received in each shipment

◆ The rejected quantity of each item as well as the reason for rejection can be recorded on every line item

◆ Users can receive unordered items, and can record any differences between ordered and received items

◆ Multiple shipments can be recorded for each order, and multiple orders can be received in one shipment

◆ Users can determine whether orders have been fully received by viewing a receiving report that tracks total receipts against each order

# Reports

*All of the data entered into Procurement Desktop is available for standard and ad-hoc reporting because of our use of a relational database.*

◆ A relational database allows individuals to create standard and ad-hoc reports without necessitating programming changes

◆ Open Actions reports provide information on all purchases that each buyer is currently processing

◆ Financial Activity reports, Vendor Performance reports, Requisition Status reports, *etc.*, give information on different aspects of purchasing activities

# Security

◆ To determine a user's authority to view, change, or delete an item, the system considers a combination of:

- **Group:** any common collection of users depending on such criteria as office, position or title

- **Object type:** a document such as requisition, purchase order, spreadsheet, *etc.*

- **Object class:** a category indicating where an object is in the purchasing process ( *e.g.,* initial creation, in approvals, *etc.*)

◆ Access may change as the document is processed: *e.g.,* a requester may no longer be able to see a purchase request once it has been approved and submitted to the purchasing office

◆ Menu access is controlled by user group: *e.g.,* requesters may not be able to access to the contract creation features

◆ A user's approval authority is based on the type and value of the document to be approved, as defined in System Administration

◆ Access to interfaces with other systems can be controlled through Procurement Desktop by incorporating additional passwords

◆ If digitized signatures are used, they can be protected through additional passwords

# Reference Library

◆ An organization's written policies, procedures and boilerplate solicitation text can be loaded into the online Reference Library, replacing cumbersome binders and hard to find information

◆ Each library document is stored in an electronic format called "hypertext" which links related sections and concepts, allowing users to quickly locate specific information and move easily between related topics

◆ From the online Reference Library, users can:

- view text for reference

- print text for reference or distribution

- copy portions of the text into documents such as Statements of Work, solicitations, and contracts

◆ In addition to accessing the Reference Library from the system, users can access library documents from third-party office automation products like word processing tools

◆ Aside from storage requirements, there is no limit to the number of documents that can be stored in the Reference Library

◆ Users can perform searches for keywords or phrases across multiple library documents

# Electronic Commerce

*Procurement Desktop provides extensive support for Electronic Commerce, including the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) transaction sets appropriate to the purchasing environment.*

◆ Electronic communication with the vendor community has been facilitated for various clients not only through the use of VANs, but also through digital signatures and workstation faxing

◆ Electronic contract files provide users with an easy, automatic way to store and track documents which can then be available to other users

◆ Electronic workflow support is provided through built-in sending and routing features

◆ Procurement Desktop is Electronic Mail-enabled

◆ Online parts catalogs have been linked to pre-approved vendors in some implementations to promote efficient use of Volume or Blanket Purchase Agreements

◆ Since Procurement Desktop can integrate with the office automation tools your organization uses, anything from word processing to the World Wide Web can be incorporated into the Desktop environment

# System Administration

Using Procurement Desktop's user-friendly system administration features, authorized users can:

◆ Define and maintain approval level information

◆ Define and maintain multiple word-processing and spreadsheet attachment templates

◆ Establish milestone templates for different parts of the purchasing life cycle, including designating various events are "required"

◆ Setup and maintain templates for solicitation and contract Terms and Conditions

◆ Set system security by assigning users to groups and objects to classes and defining document-level access based on the intersection between those designations

◆ Define lists of funding codes that should be available to individual or multiple users

◆ Maintain approval and review routes

◆ Establish benchmark "Procurement Action Lead Times" to assist managers in gauging the complexity and time frame for various types of assignments

◆ Broadcast a "Message of the Day" (e.g., a meeting notification) that appears when users first login to the system

◆ Maintain a list of acceptable "units of issue" for use throughout the system

◆ Maintain a list of the Product/Service codes used by the organization

◆ Establish default preferences for new users

◆ Define and maintain teams or work groups with access to shared "team cabinets"

◆ Setup profiles for new users, including parameters for the type and value of contracts that they are authorized to award